

# COMBONI JPIC NETWORK NEWS

Justice and peace-related news, actions, and  
resources from the Comboni Missionaries,  
North American Province

November, 2023



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## SELECTED GLOBAL TOPICS



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## UNHCR: Forced Displacement Continues to Grow as Conflicts Escalate

GENEVA - The number of people displaced by war, persecution, violence and human rights violations globally is likely to have exceeded 114 million at the end of September, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, announced today.

The main drivers of forced displacement in the first half of 2023 were: war in Ukraine and conflicts in Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Myanmar; a combination of drought, floods and insecurity in Somalia; and a prolonged humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, according to UNHCR's *Mid-Year Trends Report*, which analyses forced displacement during the first six months of this year.

"The world's focus now is – rightly – on the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza. But globally, far too many conflicts are proliferating or escalating, shattering innocent lives and uprooting people," said UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi. "The international community's inability to solve conflicts or prevent new ones is driving displacement and misery. We must look within, work together to end conflicts and allow refugees and other displaced people to return home or restart their lives."

The report launches in the run-up to the second Global Refugee Forum (GRF), the world's largest gathering on refugees and other forcibly displaced people, in Geneva from 13 to 15 December. Governments, refugees, local authorities, international organizations, civil society and the private sector will gather to strengthen the global response and search for solutions to record levels of displacement.

Learn more [here](#).

## Indian Church leaders seek probe into blasts at prayer meet



Photo by [Peter Addor](#).

Church leaders in southern *Indian* Kerala state have demanded a thorough probe into the serial blasts at a Christian prayer meeting that killed three people and wounded 52 others on Oct. 29.

The attack took place in Kalamassery in Ernakulam district where more than 2,000 followers of Jehovah's Witnesses were attending a three-day prayer meet. The injured are being treated at different hospitals and the condition of five of them is reported to be serious.

"We want a thorough probe by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) to ensure the safety and security of people in the state," said Father Jacob G Palakkappilly, spokesperson of the regional Kerala Catholic Bishops' Conference.

"This kind of attack is something unheard of in the state and a cause of worry for everyone," the Church said in a statement.

It was a "deliberate attempt to disturb communal harmony and peace in the state," it added.

Kerala is a multi-religious state with Hindus making up more than 50 percent of the 33 million people, followed by 26 percent Muslims and 18 percent Christians.



*Image by Luca Farrace*

## **Israel-Palestine: Life on the West Bank Barrier**

Sister Anna Maria Sgaramella, a Comboni missionary whose convent lies directly on Israel's Separation Wall, speaks to Vatican News about the situation on the ground there, and the Comboni sisters' work for peace.

The Comboni Missionary Sisters have been based here since 1965.

Although they're on the Israeli side of the barrier, theirs is an Arab area, and some of the sisters run a nursery for the local Palestinian population. Others work with Bedouin women in the desert, or at various Church institutions in Jerusalem.

Asked about the impact of the current violence on these activities, Sister Sgaramella notes that many of them have had to be temporarily halted. On the day that the Israel-Hamas war broke out, moreover, petrol bombs launched by Palestinian protestors towards a nearby Israeli checkpoint landed in the convent, burning parts of the nursery.

Despite this, however, Sister Sgaramella says, it is now back open, welcoming Palestinian children from both sides of the wall.

The goal of these educational activities, she says, is to "tear down" the barrier that surrounds the property, "What I mean by that," she explains, "is that our goal is to show that the other – whether they be Jewish, black, Indian, so the other in their ethnic, religious or national diversity – is still my brother."

The first thing we can do, she says, is to value and support of the work of those, on both sides, who "attempt to live out communion and unity in times of division and violence". These are figures, she stresses, that "can be found in both the Israeli and Palestinian camps." Secondly, Sister Sgaramella says, we can work toward "a greater understanding of the situation of both sides", and attempt to "embrace both parties."

## MORE TOPICS TO EXPLORE

[A Path to Belonging for People with Psychosocial Disabilities in Ghana](#)

[Bishop of Portland Deeply Saddened by Shooting in Lewiston](#)

[World Cities Day 2023: Global cities embrace refugees to boost economic growth growth and social inclusion](#)

## TAKE ACTION

### Join Sustainable Development Goals Book Club



You can join or create a group at your school dedicated to taking action towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. For example, make sure your class recycles all the papers you use to write down your great ideas! Our new reading list for SDG17: Partnerships for the Goals will inspire you to partner with your friends, family, and classmates. And for

more ideas, go back to any of the previous Goals- there are endless opportunities for all of us to make the world a better place.

Check out SDG's reading list [here](#).

# Global Goals for Sustainable Development

## Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals

**STRENGTHEN THE MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND REVITALIZE THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**MANY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ARE FACING A DEBT CRISIS**



THE SHARE OF EXPORTS FROM LDCs IN GLOBAL MERCHANDISE TRADE



HAS STAGNATED AT AROUND **1%**

SINCE 2011



NET ODA REACHED **\$206 BILLION** IN 2022, UP 15.3% FROM 2021

MAINLY OWING TO SPENDING ON REFUGEES IN DONOR COUNTRIES AND AID TO UKRAINE

NET ODA REACHED 0.37% OF GNI, STILL BELOW THE TARGET OF 0.7%

**2 IN 3 PEOPLE USED THE INTERNET**

IN 2022

259 MILLION MORE MALE THAN FEMALE USERS



**ODA FUNDING FOR DATA**



DROPPED BY MORE THAN

**20%**

{2018-2020}

Goal 17 is about revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development. The 2030 Agenda is universal and calls for action by all countries – developed and developing – to ensure no one is left behind. It requires partnerships between governments, the private sector, and civil society.

To score a goal, you have to work together as a team and develop tactics together. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals requires the same mentality. The entire world needs to team up to achieve its common goal: ensuring a better future for everybody on earth.

# U.N. International Days

2023

**November 2**

## **International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists**

The 2023 observance seeks to raise awareness of the main challenges faced by journalists and communicators in the exercise of their profession, and to warn of the escalation of violence and repression against them. This year's theme also seeks to give visibility to the role of a safe and free press in ensuring the integrity of elections and our democratic systems. [Learn more.](#)

**November 5**

## **World Tsunami Awareness Day**

In December 2015, the UN General Assembly designated 5 November as World Tsunami Awareness Day, calling on countries, international bodies and civil society to raise tsunami awareness and share innovative approaches to risk reduction. World Tsunami Awareness Day was the brainchild of Japan, which due to its repeated, bitter experience has over the years built up major expertise in areas such as tsunami early warning, public action and building back better after a disaster to reduce future impacts. [Learn more.](#)

**November 6**

## **International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict**

The United Nations attaches great importance to ensuring that action on the environment is part of conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding strategies, because there can be no durable peace if the natural resources that sustain livelihoods and ecosystems are destroyed. On 5 November 2001, the UN General Assembly declared 6 November of each year as the International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict. [Learn more.](#)

**November 9-15**

## **International Week of Science and Peace**

The International Week of Science and Peace was first observed during 1986 as part of the observance of the International Year of Peace. The organization of events and activities for the week was undertaken as a non-governmental initiative; the secretariat for the International Year of Peace was informed of the preparatory activities and the final summary of events that occurred during the week. The organizers sought to encourage the broadest possible international participation in the observance. [Learn more.](#)

**November 10**

## **World Science Day for Peace and Development**

Celebrated every 10 November, World Science Day for Peace and Development highlights the significant role of science in society and the need to engage the wider public in debates on emerging scientific issues. It also underlines the importance and relevance of science in our daily lives. By linking science more closely with society, World Science Day for Peace and Development aims to ensure that citizens are kept informed of developments in science. [Learn more.](#)

**November 14**

## **World Diabetes Day**

Globally, an estimated 422 million adults were living with diabetes in 2014, compared to 108 million in 1980. The global prevalence of diabetes has nearly doubled since 1980, rising from 4.7% to 8.5% in the adult population. The theme for World Diabetes Day 2021-23 is access to diabetes care. 100 years after the discovery of insulin, millions of people with diabetes around the world cannot access the care they

need. [Learn more.](#)

### **November 16**

#### **World Philosophy Day**

By celebrating World Philosophy Day each year, on the third Thursday of November, UNESCO underlines the enduring value of philosophy for the development of human thought, for each culture and for each individual. Philosophy is an inspiring discipline as well as an everyday practice that can transform societies. By enabling to discover the diversity of the intellectual currents in the world, philosophy stimulates intercultural dialogue. [Learn more.](#)

### **November 17**

#### **International Day for Tolerance**

In 1996, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 51/95 proclaiming November 16 as International Day for Tolerance. The Action followed the adoption of the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance by UNESCO's Member States on November 16, 1995. [Learn more.](#)

### **November 18**

#### **World Day for the Prevention of and Healing from Child Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Violence**

The creation of this international day is a groundbreaking milestone in increasing global awareness of the horrific prevalence of sexual violence against children and mobilizing action to prevent violence and support healing and justice for survivors. The data is staggering: Around 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 9 boys across the globe experience sexual violence before their eighteenth birthday. However, we know that violence is preventable, and change is possible. [Learn more.](#)

### **November 19**

#### **World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims**

The Global status report on road safety, launched by WHO in December 2018, highlights that the number of annual road traffic deaths has reached 1.35 million. Since the adoption of the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/5, the observance has spread to a growing number of countries on every continent. The Day has become an important tool in global efforts to reduce road casualties. [Learn more.](#)

### **November 20**

#### **Africa Industrialization Day**

Industrial development is of critical importance for sustained and inclusive economic growth in African countries. In July 1989, the Organization of African Unity (O.A.U.) conducted its 25th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Africa Industrialization Day was announced on November 20 during this session. [Learn more.](#)

### **November 21**

#### **World Television Day**

In recognition of the increasing impact television has on decision-making by bringing world attention to conflicts and threats to peace and security and its potential role in sharpening the focus on other major issues, including economic and social issues, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 21 November as World Television Day (through *resolution 51/205* of 17 December 1996). [Learn more.](#)

### **November 25**

#### **International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women**

Five years ago, the #MeToo movement, founded by activist Tarana Burke in 2006, exploded and sparked global mobilization creating a moment of urgency in preventing and responding to violence against women and girls. The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women will mark the launch of the UNiTE campaign (Nov 25- Dec 10) — an initiative of 16 days of activism concluding on the day that commemorates the International Human Rights Day (10 December). [Learn](#)

[more.](#)

**November 26**

**World Sustainable Transport Day**

Sustainable transport — with its objectives of universal access, enhanced safety, reduced environmental and climate impact, improved resilience, and greater efficiency — is central to sustainable development. [Learn more.](#)

**November 29**

**International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People**

In 1977, the General Assembly called for the annual observance of 29 November as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People (resolution 32/40 B). On that day, in 1947, the Assembly adopted the resolution on the partition of Palestine (resolution 181 (II)). [Learn more.](#)

**November 30**

**Day of Remembrance for all the Victims of Chemical Warfare**

The *Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, at its 20th Session, decided* that a memorial Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare would be observed on 30 November each year. This commemoration provides an opportunity to pay tribute to the victims of chemical warfare, as well as to reaffirm the commitment of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to the elimination of the threat of chemical weapons. [Learn more.](#)



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